

THE KREMLIN'S TERMS TO THE WEST

Politburo Foreign Policy from the Inside

BORIS MEISSNER

LET there be no doubt about it: in the Soviet Union, final decisions rest with the *Vojd* (Russian for *Führer*) alone. So sharp an observer as James F. Byrnes notes in his book, *Speaking Frankly*, how he often saw Stalin, in contrast to Molotov, make on-the-spot decisions of such importance that it appeared hardly conceivable that he was fundamentally dependent on the Politburo (Political Bureau of the Communist party of the USSR). Yet there is also no doubt that the Politburo can sway these decisions to an important extent. The Soviet Union is a one-party state—that is to say, the party makes the decisions and the state carries them out. The party machine is the

WE KNOW that, ultimately, Stalin rules supreme in the USSR, but we also know that to some degree he is influenced by the opinions of the members of the Politburo. Obviously, it is not much easier to find out what the Politburo is thinking than what is in Stalin's mind. Nevertheless, BORIS MEISSNER believes that there is sufficient evidence available to link the shifting course of Russian foreign policy with the record of the conflict of different groupings within the Politburo; and he further believes that Russian policy today, both in the East and West, reflects the ascendancy of one particular grouping with a definite policy line of some years' history. Though his conclusions are necessarily speculative to a degree, they are based on a first-hand knowledge of Russia and on years of careful study that have won him a reputation in Europe as one of the most informed of all specialists in Soviet affairs. Mr. Meissner was born in Estonia in 1915, and was educated at the University of Dorpat there. Since the war, having survived both Hitler and Stalin, he has been working at the Research Center for International Law and Foreign Governmental Law at the University of Hamburg. He has published a half dozen books since 1947, the last of them a study of the social and power structure of the USSR. This article is translated from German by Maurice J. Goldbloom.

one that counts; the machinery of the state itself is confined to purely administrative functions. At its pinnacle is, of course, Stalin, head of the party and sole vessel of sovereignty. But always there stands by his side the Politburo, acting as an advisory council and as the highest executive organ of the party, and thus of the state too.

As Stalin's personal brain trust, the Politburo acts in effect as the general staff of the Soviet state and of world Communism. The *Vojd*, though not bound by the majority preferences of the Politburo, will frequently call for its advice before making any fundamental decision and, where it cannot be convoked at once, will ask its opinion after the decision has been taken.

The Politburo has the crucial task of concentrating Stalin's power and helping to safeguard and consolidate it. He, in return, must give consideration to the opinions of its members, especially when two, three, or more of them form a fairly stable faction. Stalin will often shape his policy in accordance with the advice of these factions, or groupings, not merely on objective grounds, but for tactical reasons as well. But he will see to it, by applying the principle of divide and rule, that none of these factions, no matter how powerful, will ever be able to place drastic limitations on his freedom of action.

Because of the authority of Stalin, most conflicts within the Politburo are now solved either by compromise or by the eventual liquidation of those members whose policies might in the long run lead to a really serious breach. But in the interregnum likely to follow Stalin's death, the Politburo will automatically become the highest organ of the Soviet state. It would then have the duty, as a regents' council, of preserving the con-

tinuity of the autocratic form of that state. Moreover, the Politburo alone would decide upon Stalin's successor as *Vojd*, with the outcome of its decision depending, in the final analysis, on the positions of power held by the individual factions in the Politburo. These groupings have in some respects already taken on sharp outline. There is also evidence that they exert a significant influence on the aging Stalin, and thus on present Soviet policy.

AFTER the purges of the mid-30's, in which five members of the Politburo were "liquidated" and two died under mysterious circumstances, the Politburo was reconstituted at the 18th and 19th Party Congress, in 1939 and 1941 respectively. It soon could be ascertained that two distinct factions had emerged in the new Politburo. One group was Great Russian in national composition and based on the party organization in the Russian Federated Soviet Republic. Leningrad was its center, although it reached out to Moscow. Zhdanov, Sherbakov, Andreyev, and Vosnesensky were its members. The second group, formed around L. M. Kaganovich in Moscow, was of mixed nationality and based largely on the party organizations in White Russia, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, and Turkestan. Besides Kaganovich, it included Mikoyan, Khrustschev, Beria, and Malenkov. Stalin and Molotov, of the older generation, usually took a mediating position between the two groups, but Kalinin, Voroshilov, and Shvernik inclined more to the Zhdanov side.

Though the influence of the Zhdanov (Great Russian) faction was in the ascendant in the Politburo after the purges, Hitler's attack in 1941 enabled the Kaganovich group to come to the fore. Together with Stalin and Molotov, Kaganovich's group formed the State Committee for Defense, which served as the real war cabinet. Later on, however, the important contributions made by the new intelligentsia (journalists, technicians, political commissars, etc.) and the Great Russians to the Soviet successes in the war restored the balance—the

Zhdanov group being their chief spokesmen in the Politburo. In the spring of 1945 the sudden death of Sherbakov, who during the war had headed the political high command of the Red Army, as well as the Soviet Information Bureau, was a serious loss to Zhdanov's side, and led him to seek closer cooperation with Malenkov.

In general, the changes in personnel in the Politburo immediately after the war appear to have been the result of a compromise between the two opposed groupings. Beria and Malenkov, after serving as candidate-members, became full members in 1946, and Bulganin, Kossigin, and Kusnetzov became candidate-members. After Kalinin's death, Vosnesensky was promoted from a candidate-member to the tenth full membership. Bulganin and Kossigin had made a name for themselves in the state and economic administration, the former as Stalin's deputy Minister of Defense, the latter as Prime Minister of the Russian Federated Soviet Republic, and in their rise had been closely connected with Kaganovich; while Kusnetzov, like Vosnesensky, belonged among Zhdanov's outspoken followers, and headed the Leningrad party organization as his representative.

Nineteen forty-six and 1947 saw the high point of Zhdanov's power. His sudden and mysterious death in the fall of 1948, together with a reform of the party administration, created a completely altered relation of forces inside the party leadership. Vosnesensky and Kusnetzov were dropped from the Politburo, and the party organizations in Leningrad and Moscow, as well as the state apparatus of the Russian Federated Soviet Republic, were purged of Zhdanov's adherents. The leadership of the Politburo fell to the "*troika*"—Beria, Malenkov, and Khrustschev—who succeeded in filling the most important positions in the party with their own adherents.

In 1950, the *troika* tried to bring about the downfall of Andreyev, a maneuver that was blocked only by the intervention of the Politburo's older members. The latter now seem to feel themselves threatened by the power concentrated in the hands of the new

triumvirate—especially since the existing divisions have, from the time of the exclusion of the Zhdanov group, taken on more and more the character of a struggle between the generations. This conflict will not be so easy to heal permanently, for it is bound to be deepened further by the continuing pressure of the younger, third, Soviet generation, which still goes completely unrepresented in the Politburo although predominating in the party as a whole.

TODAY the Beria-Malenkov-Khrushchev triumvirate dominates the party apparatus, the State Police, the cultural and economic administrations, and the party and state supervisory bodies. The opposition, gathered around Molotov, and to which Mikoyan too has apparently gone over, retains dominance only in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including the foreign trade organization) and the army. A struggle for influence in the mass organizations of the USSR is now going on, while the navy is apparently following an independent policy of its own. This shift in the balance of power has permitted Marshal Bulganin, who has the confidence of the army as well as of the state and economic bureaucracy, to come forward.

The *troika's* position was shaken by Khrushchev's defeat on the question of "kolkhoz cities" at the beginning of 1951 (when his policy of consolidating most of the collective farms into even larger units of somewhat urban character ended in a fiasco), but Beria and Malenkov have in the meanwhile succeeded in restoring it. It was Beria who delivered the main address in celebration of the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution on November 6, 1951, and Malenkov's fiftieth birthday was celebrated on January 8, 1952 in a way that let it be known that he could be considered the predestined successor of Stalin. It was particularly striking that Malenkov's picture, together with the joint congratulations of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR was, in contrast to earlier practice on the birthdays of Politburo members, run by the Soviet

press in large format over the whole middle of the front page.

WHAT are the basic issues at the heart of these factional struggles? To all appearances, the conflicts inside the Politburo after the great purges have been motivated by considerations more of foreign than of domestic policy. There is unity on the immediate goal of building "Communism in one country," i.e., the building of an externally secure, large-scale, and autarchic economy. There is unity also on the ultimate goal of a Eurasian Soviet empire stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, guaranteeing Communist predominance in the world at large. But there is disagreement on the strategy and tactics for achieving these goals.

On the eve of the Second World War, the majority of the Politburo, whether adherents of Zhdanov or of Kaganovich-Beria-Malenkov, seem to have been of the opinion that the immediate goal of security would not be achieved with the resources then available to the Soviet Union, and that an *expansion* of her basis of power, even with the aid of force, was required. This majority was split, however, on the question of what *geographical direction* the expansion should take and what *tactics* were most suitable. Zhdanov and Molotov, together with the latter's first deputy in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, present Foreign Minister Vishinsky, advocated moving westwards and acting through the Communist-infiltrated Balkan and Latin nations. Malenkov and Beria, represented in the Foreign Commissariat by Deputy Foreign Commissar Dekanosov, favored moving towards Asia, with a cautious policy in Europe. Stalin skillfully avoided committing himself to either view, although his sympathies, so far as we know, had always gone more toward Beria and Malenkov than Zhdanov.

It is necessary to appreciate Zhdanov's powerful and impulsive personality if one wishes to understand the force of attraction he exerted on the other members of the Politburo, and the strength of his influence, not only in relation to a Molotov or a Malen-

kov, but even to Stalin himself. Though there were never particularly close or wholehearted ties between the two, Stalin had great respect for Zhdanov, who displayed qualities that only Stalin's model and teacher, Lenin, and his great enemy, Trotsky, had shown in comparable measure.

Superior intelligence was combined in Zhdanov's person with irresistible revolutionary *élan*. Like Lenin, Zhdanov came from the old Russian intelligentsia. Full of youthful idealism, he had early joined the radical, Bolshevik wing of the socialist labor movement, and then become one of the chief architects of the new Stalinist Russia, particularly in the ideological field. It was he who helped pave the way for the preeminence, as a class, of the new bureaucratized intelligentsia, of whom he was the typical representative. That socialist drives were supplanted by patriotic and nationalist ones, as the original impulses of the Bolshevik revolution waned, was chiefly Zhdanov's doing—and the Soviet Union survived the recent war thanks largely to Russian nationalist spirit (as well as to Nazi errors).

Zhdanov first became prominent in foreign policy at the constitution-making 8th All-Union Soviet Congress in December 1936, when he directed vigorous oratorical attacks against the Baltic states and threatened that, if occasion was given, the Red Army would enlarge the Soviet's much too small window on Europe by force. In 1938 he was made chairman of the foreign policy committee of the authoritative Council of the Union in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, from which office he was able to make his influence felt directly on the Foreign Commissariat, at that time still headed by Litvinov. The Munich pact in 1938 gave the ascendancy in the Politburo to the advocates of a bolder foreign policy, and at the same time there then appeared more markedly those differences of view over tactics and immediate goals that have been mentioned.

For the Zhdanov group, the chief enemies of the moment were Britain and Germany; for the Beria group, Britain and Japan. Their

common opposition to Britain permitted the two groups to go along with each other for a while in European and, especially, German policy; both were willing to deal with Hitler in order to prevent him from lining up with England and France. Thus Litvinov's replacement by Molotov in the spring of 1939 was approved of by both factions.

In order to have a counterweight to Vishinsky, who was particularly under Zhdanov's influence, Dekanosov was taken into the Foreign Commissariat as Vice-Commissar to represent the Beria-Malenkov group. Dekanosov was a countryman of Stalin and Beria, having filled important posts in the party and state apparatus of Soviet Georgia. After Beria was appointed chief of the State Police in 1938, he had brought Dekanosov to Moscow to direct the Foreign Section of the NKVD (now the MVD). There he had had the task, not merely of looking after the interests of the State Police in the Foreign Commissariat, but also of putting into effect Beria's conception of a policy of rapprochement with Germany.

Zhdanov's special aim in foreign policy was the conquest of the Baltic states and Finland, and the recovery thereby of Russian dominance in the Baltic. When, in the summer of 1939, the negotiations in regard to the Baltic question between Britain and France on the one side, and the Soviet Union on the other, failed to progress, Zhdanov wrote a prominent article in *Pravda* of June 29, 1939, in which he violently criticized both Western powers. The result was that they agreed provisionally to a pact for mutual assistance that meant, in effect, the handing over of the Baltic states to Russia. But Poland's opposition blocked the final ratification of this document, and helped persuade Zhdanov of the temporary advantage of going along with Beria in seeking an accord with Germany.

THE collaboration of the Zhdanov and Beria factions in the Politburo on a policy approved of by Stalin led to the Hitler-Stalin pact, in the late summer of 1939, which gave to the Soviet Union the

Baltic states, Eastern Poland, and Bessarabia. By this stroke the ambitions of both Zhdanov and Beria were gratified: Russia had got the Baltic states *and* a deal with Germany.

Hitler's attack on Russia two years later in the summer of 1941 undoubtedly weakened Zhdanov's position in the fields both of domestic and foreign policy, since Stalin—who did not want this war—put the principal blame for the worsening of German-Soviet relations on him, for it was he who had been the chief advocate of a bolder exploitation of the chances the Hitler-Stalin pact had provided for Russian expansion in the Baltic and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. A moderate middle group around Mikoyan now came to the fore in the Politburo and sided with Molotov in favor of collaboration with the Western powers. Yet this did not decisively lessen the influence of Beria's group, which now began to try in various ways to reach another German-Soviet settlement. Aside from feelers extended by way of Japan, the most interesting efforts to this end were the approaches made by Soviet intermediaries in Stockholm to a representative of the German Foreign Office. The latter, one Peter Kleist, has recently told of these in his book *Zwischen Hitler und Stalin* (Athenaeum Verlag, Bad Godesberg, 1950).*

* The approach was made in Stockholm, after the German defeat at Stalingrad. The Soviet ambassador to Sweden was Alexandra Kollontai, who had long enjoyed Stalin's especial confidence. The counselor of her embassy, and her closest advisor, was one Semyonov, a close associate, in turn, of Dekanosov. On Semyonov's behalf a certain Clauss approached Kleist in order to arrange a meeting between him and A.M. Alexandrov, the director of the Central European section of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat. Clauss told Kleist that the principal interests of the Soviet Union lay in Asia, not in Europe, and he especially emphasized China's importance to the Kremlin's plans. (Clauss, instructed by Semyonov, was here only repeating the line advocated by Beria and approved of by Stalin.) The concrete proposals which he made when, by agreement with Ribbentrop, Kleist saw him a second time, in August 1943, included a demand for the restoration of the Russo-German border of 1914, a free hand in the Balkans and the Straits, and, above all, Germany's non-interference with Soviet ambitions in Asia. Since the initiative had come from the Beria "peace"

FROM the Moscow foreign ministers' conference in 1943, the way led through Teheran, Yalta, and San Francisco to Potsdam. In opposition to the Western ideal of one indivisible world, the Politburo was united in asserting the existence of two hostile worlds. A new "dynamic" policy, supported by the Beria-Malenkov as well as the Zhdanov group, led, after 1945, to the rapid Sovietization of the countries in the Russian sphere of influence in East Europe. The immediate result was another break with the Western powers; at the same time Zhdanov, and the aggressive attitude toward the West associated with him, regained their old influence.

At the founding of the Cominform in Warsaw in the fall of 1947, Malenkov appeared at Zhdanov's side as representative of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, thereby letting it be known that the Politburo was united behind Zhdanov. Yet a real conflict between Zhdanov and the majority of the Politburo had already broken out. The Beria-Malenkov group needed, for the time being, a strong attitude toward the West simply in order to be able to pursue their ambitions in Asia. All they wanted in Europe was the accelerated Sovietization of the countries in the Eastern bloc and their federation with the USSR, and a "mild" German policy that would assure the Soviet

faction, these proposals were doubtless thought of as a basis on which Hitler might be willing to negotiate. There was no reaction, however, from the German side.

At his third meeting with Kleist, in September 1943, the Soviet intermediary pressed for an immediate decision, since the Moscow conference of Allied foreign ministers was in the offing. He told Kleist that the naming of the Soviet Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs and last ambassador to Berlin, Dekanosov, to a foreign post was to serve as a sign of Stalin's readiness to negotiate with Hitler. The German side would have to answer this announcement by appointing the former German ambassador to Moscow, von Schulenburg, to a similar post. Soon afterwards, Dekanosov was, in fact, announced as the new Soviet ambassador to Sofia; simultaneously came the news that on October 30, 1943, a conference of Allied foreign ministers would take place in Moscow. But Hitler still failed to respond, and thus he let slip his last chance for a new agreement with Stalin.

Union a decisive influence in Europe without risk of war. Zhdanov stood in the way of this with his advocacy of an aggressive policy extending far beyond the limits of the Soviet sphere in the West.

The Beria-Malenkov group's attempt to influence Soviet occupation policy in Germany through its representative in the Soviet military administration there, Semyonov, was blocked at first by Colonel Tulpanov, who, as Zhdanov's agent, held the long end of the lever. But Zhdanov failed in the end to achieve the success hoped for with his European policy; it led only to the Berlin blockade and its defeat, and then to Titoism, with the collapse of Russia's Balkan dreams and of the hopes she had placed in Pan-Slavic sentiment in that area.

It seems highly probable that at this point Zhdanov, supported by army circles, advocated military action, at least against Tito if not against Berlin, but was overruled by Stalin and the majority of the Politburo, both because of the possibilities then opening up for Soviet expansion in Asia, and because of the military weaknesses of the Soviet Union. In any case, immediately after Zhdanov's death the Soviet Union began to rearm at an accelerated rate, and at the same time the center of gravity of her foreign policy and activity shifted from Europe to Asia.

THE death of Zhdanov signaled the victory of the Beria-Malenkov group in domestic as well as foreign policy. A large majority of the Politburo having declared themselves for the Beria-Malenkov line in foreign policy, its practical execution in Asia was entrusted to Malenkov, Molotov, and Mikoyan jointly, while Beria was given a greater hand in European policy. Success justified Beria and Malenkov at first. Some weeks after Zhdanov's death, Mao Tse-tung began, with Soviet support, his victorious advance in China and by the end of 1949 had imposed his rule on the Chinese mainland as far as Tibet. All China thereby became a Soviet sphere of influence, with Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, and the constituent parts of

Manchuria under immediate Soviet control.

But the Politburo's goal was all Asia, and the road to that goal led over China to India, and farther. Malenkov clearly formulated this in his great programmatic speech on the thirty-second anniversary of the revolution on November 6, 1949, when he said: "As Lenin pointed out in 1923, the outcome of the world struggle between capitalism and Communism will be ultimately determined by the fact that Russia, India, and China possess the great majority of mankind, and that this majority of mankind is entering with extraordinary speed upon its struggle for liberation."

Malenkov must at this time have remembered another of Lenin's pronouncements: that only he possesses Europe who holds Germany—for the rest of his speech expressed the conviction that Germany was the key to Europe. (In contrast, Zhdanov had believed that the Soviet Union had had the chance to snatch this key, not in Germany, but in the Slavic and Latin countries. That he had gone against a dictum of Lenin's must have made the failure of his European line all the more compromising to him in the eyes of Stalin and the rest of the Politburo.

The victory of the Beria-Malenkov group meant at first calling a halt in Europe outside the Soviet sphere proper. The Berlin blockade was lifted, and the fate of Tito's Yugoslavia was left to the "cold war." Germany sprang into the focus of Soviet ambitions not merely as an object but as a subject capable, within limits, of acting for herself. There is enough evidence available to show that German nationalism has been encouraged by the direct intervention of agents of the Soviet State Police; these agents take their orders, ultimately, from Beria. For Beria, it is probably less a question of the Sovietization of Germany than of her neutralization.

IT MAY be that the Politburo hoped that after a decisive victory in Asia it would be able to pass over to the offensive in Europe, too, in Zhdanov's spirit. The accel-

erated rearming of the Atlantic Pact countries and the threatening remilitarization of Western Germany seem by now, however, to have excluded this possibility.

The publication in the Soviet press on April 22, 1950, for the first time, of two interviews given by Lenin to an American and a British correspondent, respectively, in 1920* hinted at the basic conditions on which Stalin and his Politburo were prepared to call a halt to the "cold war" all over the world and go over to "peaceful coexistence." (In retrospect, the publication of these interviews can be seen as the first step in the present effort being made by the Soviet to change its line in the cold war.) Those conditions are: acceptance by the West of the status quo in East and Central Europe, and a permanent demarcation of Western and Soviet spheres of interest in Europe and Asia. Though Beria and Malenkov may be ready to make certain territorial concessions in Europe, they cannot renounce this basic demand for a hard and fast demarcation of spheres of interest. Greater concessions might be expected in Asia from Molotov and Bulganin, but scarcely in Europe. Mikoyan and Kaganovich would perhaps, for economic reasons, be the readiest to make concessions in both Europe and Asia. The line advocated by the Beria-Malenkov group continues, at any rate, in force. Its latest expression was the Soviet note of March 10, 1952, on Germany, and the Soviet press's comments on the thirtieth anniversary of the Rapallo agreement between Russia and Germany on April 10, 1952.

During the period of diplomatic jockeying

* Lenin declared to the correspondent of the New York *Evening Journal* that the new Soviet state had no aggressive designs upon anyone, wished from now on to devote herself solely to peaceful construction, and was prepared to establish normal trade relations with the rest of the world. The only pre-condition was that Soviet Russia be left in peace. He said more or less the same things to the London *Daily Express* correspondent, adding that the status quo of that time was completely satisfactory to the Soviet regime. Both these interviews were given in February 1920, when the tide of the civil war was turning decisively against the Whites, and the Allies had just raised their blockade of Red Russia.

that followed the Munich pact in 1938, the possibility of closer ties between Germany and the West had already begun to frighten Stalin, and his pact with Hitler in 1939 was determined upon in order to avert this. Today the Soviet Union sees herself again confronted with the prospect of close ties between the West and at least the major part of Germany. And today, again, her whole endeavor is to block this. That, of course, is the meaning of the last Soviet note on Germany.

Most of the ideas in the note of March 10 are not new, having been part of almost every proposal from the Kremlin for the settlement of the German question since 1946. What is most important is that this particular note leaves the door open to negotiations. Thus, there is no talk of the Oder-Neisse line as an "unalterable peace frontier"—though in the event of negotiations the Kremlin would probably start off by reasserting this. The proposal that Germany be granted a position of armed neutrality is, on the other hand, altogether new. It is a sign that the Kremlin is ready for a revision of the Potsdam decisions.

IT WILL be recalled that until 1949 the Soviet had supported the idea of a neutral but unarmed Germany. The Cominform decisions of December 1949 changed this, taking as their point of departure the thesis that "In the struggle for peace nobody can remain neutral," and that Germany had to be won for the Soviets. This line was advanced by all the big guns of the regime in the Eastern Zone, Walter Ulbricht, secretary-general of the Socialist Unity party, declaring: "Anyone wanting to preserve the peace must undertake a determined struggle against the policy of neutrality."

All the more astounding, therefore, is the Kremlin's sudden willingness now to agree to armed neutrality for Germany. Put in the context of the general foreign policy supported by the Beria-Malenkov group, this approach is seen to be more than mere propaganda. Germany's armed neutralization would avert the danger of an alliance be-

tween Germany and the West and create a *cordon sanitaire* in Europe, which would in effect "contain" all efforts to weaken the Soviet sphere of dominance, and which would insure that, in case of war, Europe could be quickly annexed by the Red Army.

The Beria-Malenkov group apparently aims at two things: (1) the creation of a girdle of neutral states extending from Finland and Scandinavia through Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy to the Near and Middle East; (2) tighter ties between the belt of satellite states—the "popular democracies"—and the Soviet Union. It is these aims that also explain the initiative taken by Finnish Premier Kekkonen in favor of a Scandinavian policy of neutrality, and the Soviet notes to Italy and Turkey, as well as the change in the leadership of the Communist party of Switzerland. All this would serve to pry Germany loose from any alignment with the West, and at the same time she would be kept from becoming really dangerous by having her armament limited; meanwhile time would be gained for the complete integration in the Soviet empire of the largest part of non-Russian East Europe.

In order to render palatable to the West the worldwide territorial division of interests that the USSR now regards as the one basic condition for ending the cold war, the Kremlin has begun to emphasize its special interest in the expansion of world trade. Here, again, the cue can be found in the Lenin interviews of 1920. The initiative for the International Economic Conference held in Moscow from April 3 to April 12, 1952, came from the Berlin meeting of the World Peace Council in February 1951, and the economic conference was just as propagandistic in essence as the "peace" movement. Red trade is supposed to serve as bait and, if need be, a means of pressure on the surrounding capitalist world. Mikoyan's declaration in 1939 that Soviet foreign trade was primarily a function of Soviet foreign policy should be remembered.

TURNING away from these siren songs, to which so many Western businessmen

have shown themselves susceptible, one has to conclude that the readiness of the Kremlin to reach a permanent settlement with the West has grown in direct proportion to the will of the free world to defend itself. Further increased military efforts by the Atlantic Pact powers, in conjunction with an active foreign policy that takes account of the real power relationships, might well bring about the creation of a new balance of power on a global scale—and on terms favorable to the West rather than the East.

To be sure, if lasting peace is the goal of such a "policy of strength," the West must avoid anything that might forever preclude an understanding with the Soviet Union. The Atlantic Pact and the temporary inclusion of a rearmed Germany in NATO cannot, despite all the protests of Communist propaganda, be construed as doing that. On the contrary, German participation in Western defense can only speed the end of the cold war by establishing a *cordon sanitaire* against Russia instead of Germany's becoming part of a *cordon sanitaire* against the West.

Nevertheless, care has to be taken lest the proposals connected with European integration be interpreted, in conjunction with the Atlantic Pact, as part of a real threat of preventive war. An undoctinaire and elastic foreign policy on the part of the West that aims to wrest from the Soviet the maximum of peaceable concessions must take into account the limits within which Stalin and the Politburo have to operate under almost any circumstances. The heightened national consciousness of the Soviet intelligentsia and the oversensitive prestige of a totalitarian dictatorship do not, alas, permit the Politburo to make retreats in foreign policy indefinitely. The "cold war," by itself, cannot lead to a definitive victory of the West. For such a victory to come about without a third world war, fundamental social and political changes will have to take place behind the Iron Curtain. What the West can do, if anything, to promote such changes, is another problem—possibly the most important one.